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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 002220

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PHUM PREL PGOV KIRF SOCI CH

SUBJECT: A/S KRAMER DISCUSSES TIBETAN AND UIGHUR ISSUES  
WITH PRC STATE ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.  
4 (b) and (d).

Summary

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¶1. (C) In a May 27 meeting with State Ethnic Affairs Commission Vice Minister Wu Shiming, DRL A/S Kramer urged China to seize the opportunity to seek "real results" in the dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives. Vice Minister Wu replied that progress does not depend on the Chinese side alone and urged those concerned with China and Tibet to look at the Dalai Lama's actions as well as his words. Wu agreed with A/S Kramer that only a tiny number of Uighurs are terrorists and asserted it is Chinese law and Chinese Government policy to protect and develop Uighur culture. End Summary.

Minorities in China

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¶2. (C) Vice Minister Wu noted that China's 55 ethnic minorities comprise over 100 million people (note: 7.7% of China's roughly 1.3 billion people). These minorities have "significantly different levels of economic and social development," compared to the rest of China. China is one of the few countries to devote a specialized government body to fulfilling the special requirements of minority groups related to their traditional cultures. China has been a unified multi-ethnic nation since 221 B.C. and has had a specialized governmental department of ethnic affairs for centuries. Wu said that China as a whole can only develop and prosper if ethnic minority groups do also.

Tibet Concerns

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¶3. (C) A/S Kramer said that support for China's territorial integrity is "the core of U.S. policy" and that the United States does not support calls for Tibetan independence. However, the United States stresses the utmost respect for the rights, cultures and languages of minority groups. Speaking frankly "as a friend," Kramer said the United States has concerns with China's "Patriotic Education Campaign" in Tibet, which forces Tibetan monks to renounce the Dalai Lama. Kramer noted that because many Tibetans (and others) hold the Dalai Lama in the highest esteem, Chinese efforts to force denunciations could lead to more resentment and, eventually, possible violence, which the United States and China both oppose.

¶4. (C) Kramer said the United States supports China's decision to meet the Dalai Lama's representatives and sees China's willingness to engage in dialogue as a "sign of strength." Kramer said the Dalai Lama is influential and highly respected and, in public and in private, rejects violence, rejects separatism, and does not call for Tibetan independence. Now is the time to seize the opportunity for

real results, because when China talks to the Dalai Lama "it is talking to a reasonable man."

¶15. (C) EAP DAS Christensen reiterated that China's dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives should "show some real results." Some in the Tibetan movement, Christensen said, advocate violence. The Dalai Lama renounces violence and Tibetan independence. Thus, China should strengthen the Dalai Lama's hand by agreeing to real progress in the dialogue. DAS Christensen cautioned that negotiations with the Tibetan movement will become more difficult after the death of the Dalai Lama. Without the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan movement will be split and find it difficult to reach internal agreement on how to approach Beijing. The Dalai Lama is a unifying figure dedicated to non-violence, and the time for progress is now. Along the same lines, Christensen urged China to distinguish between peaceful and violent protests. Some leaders in Beijing seem to regard any protest to be tantamount to violence, which is not only inaccurate but also makes it impossible to engage peaceful elements in the Tibetan movement in a constructive manner.

¶16. (C) Wu said he was grateful for Kramer's remarks in support of China's territorial integrity and noted Kramer's comment that the United States deplores violence in Tibet. The Tibet issue, Wu said, "is not primarily a religious, social, ethnic or cultural problem, but at its core relates to China's sovereignty." Wu noted that protestors during violent March disturbances burned the Chinese flag and displayed the Tibetan exile flag. China throughout history has exercised sovereignty over Tibet, and China's 1.3 billion people will never accept or recognize an independent Tibet.

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China and the United States both oppose violence, and China will not use violence against peaceful protests. Indeed, the Chinese Government showed "great restraint" handling the violent March protests. The Dalai Lama is clearly not only a religious figure but a political leader. Wu urged those interested in China and Tibet to look at the Dalai Lama's actions as well as his words. China continues dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives, and this "channel remains open," but whether the dialogue achieves results does not depend only on the Chinese side. As long as there is no issue of Tibetan independence and no violence, there will be "favorable conditions" for the dialogue.

#### Uighur Issues

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¶17. (C) A/S Kramer said that the United States recognizes that an extremely small number of Uighurs engages in terrorism. Recognizing the evidence, the United States agreed to designate the East Turkistan Independence Movement (ETIM) as a terrorist organization and has shared information about terrorist activities with the Chinese Government. However, only a tiny number of Uighurs are engaged in terrorism, and the United States encourages the greatest respect for Uighur culture and language. EAP DAS Christensen said that some nations facing a terrorist threat tend to react in a sweeping fashion and sometimes fail to distinguish between religious extremism and religion in general. The United States wants China to be stable, peaceful and successful, and raises concerns over the treatment of Uighurs in that spirit.

¶18. (C) Wu said China shares the U.S. view that only a few Uighurs are terrorists. China knows that the more than eight million Chinese Uighurs share a "splendid culture well known all over the world and China is happy to have them as part of the family." Respect and protection of Uighur culture is Chinese Government policy. Wu said that he worries about preserving all of China's minority cultures in the face of rapid modernization. Some cultures are inevitably changing in the face of rapid development, and such change is natural. For example, Uighurs have not always been Muslims and, before the 11th century, were actually Buddhists.

Nonetheless, ethnic minority cultures need to be protected and developed in much the same way as China needs to protect and develop its natural environment. Such a policy is not only in China's interest but in the world's interest.

¶9. (U) Participants:

UNITED STATES

David J. Kramer, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Rights, and Labor  
Thomas Christensen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Robert K. Harris, Assistant Legal Advisor, Department of State  
Richard W. Behrend, PRM Advisor, Department of State  
Susan O'Sullivan, Senior Advisor, Bureau of Democracy, Rights, and Labor, Department of State  
Ted Lyng, First Secretary, Embassy Beijing (notetaker)  
Jeannette M. Windon, Special Assistant, Office of Democracy and Global Affairs, Department of State  
Steve Goldrup, Second Secretary, Embassy Beijing  
Andrea Goodman, Political Officer, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State  
Vicky Segal, Interpreter

PRC

Wu Shiming, Vice Minister, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
Wang Qianli, Director General, International Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
Liu Wanqing, Deputy Director General, Policy and Law Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
Lan Zhiqi, Deputy Director General, Culture and Publicity Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
He Yinjie, Deputy Director General, Education Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
Wu Jinguang, Deputy Director General, International Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission  
Bamo Aiyi, Deputy Director General, International Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission

¶10. (U) The delegation cleared this message.  
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